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Bureau of Land Management
California

National Landscape Conservation System

The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) is a core system of specially protected and managed federal lands, including monuments, wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, scenic and historic trails, and conservation areas. It is a system that conserves, protects, and restores our nationally significant landscapes, standing proudly alongside parks and refuges.

Previous Designations

The seeds of a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land protection system were planted in 1970 when Congress created the King Range National Conservation Area on the Pacific Coast in northern California. Since then, many other special areas have been designated throughout the nation. Some noted California examples include:

- California Desert Conservation Area, designated through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act in 1976
- Headwaters Forest Reserve, acquired in 1999 and co-managed with the state of California
- Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, designated by Congressional legislation in October 2000
- Carrizo Plain National Monument, designated by presidential proclamation on January 17, 2001.
- California Coastal National Monument, designated by presidential proclamation on January 11, 2000.

NLCS Objectives

With these designations, a pattern has emerged - these protected conservation units have the overriding management objective of conservation and restoration of the landscape and the protection of biological diversity. These areas are typically withdrawn from mineral entry, and funding will focus on more intensive management such as biological restoration and interpretation.

King Range National Conservation Area

BLM NLCS Areas in California

- California Coastal National Monument
- Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument
- Carrizo Plain National Monument
- King Range National Conservation Area
- California Desert Conservation Area
- Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area
- Headwaters Forest Reserve
- Wilderness Areas
- Wilderness Study Areas
- National Wild and Scenic Rivers
- National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails

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Northern California

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"Touch the earth...rest your spirit in her solitary places."

Henry Beston

California Coastal National Monument

Recognized as a biological treasure and a crucial part of a fragile coastal ecosystem, the California Coastal National Monument encompasses the thousands of islands, rocks, exposed reefs, and pinnacles off the California coast above the mean high water mark that are under the jurisdiction of BLM. It contains many geological formations that provide unique feeding and nesting habitat for breeding seabirds and ocean mammals. The monument runs the length of California's 840 mile coast and extends out for 12 miles. BLM cooperatively manages the monument through an existing agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game and Department of State Parks and Recreation.

Headwaters Forest Reserve

Totalling 7,400 acres in central Humboldt County, the Headwaters Forest Reserve and surrounding land were acquired from private owners to protect and preserve important ecological and wildlife values. Stands of old-growth redwoods provide habitat for the threatened marbled murrelet, and stream systems provide critical habitat for the threatened coho salmon.

Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area

The Black Rock-High Rock Canyon area features preserved segments of the famous Applegate-Lassen National Historic Trail, a major route for gold-seekers in the mid-1800's. This area contains national register archaeology sites, important wildlife and riaprian habitat, proposed wilderness areas, and outstanding scenery.

King Range National Conservation Area

A spectacular meeting of land and sea. Black sand beaches, old-growth forests and a 4,000 foot high wall of windswept peaks beckon to adventurous travelers willing to slow down for awhile. Referred to as "The Lost Coast," the 35-mile King Range coastline is one of America's most spectacular and largest undeveloped stretches.

Southern California

"The landscapes were like a violin bow that played upon my soul."

Stendhal

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

Jutting 7,000 feet skyward above the Coachella Valley, lies a landscape of desert shrubs with hidden palm canyons and conifer-capped peaks. The scenic, biological, cultural, and recreational resources afforded in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains make this 272,000 acre national monument important to valley residents and thousands of annual visitors.

California Desert Conservation Area

Encompassing 25-million acres of public, military and private lands in southern California, the California Desert contains vast historical, scenic, wilderness, archaeological, environmental, biological, cultural, recreational and economic resources.

Carrizo Plain National Monument

The Carrizo Plain is the largest remnant of the vast grasslands of the Central Valley, as they existed in California over 300 years ago. It is a powerful, yet peaceful landscape of sky and earth in a pattern seen nowhere else.

At over 204,000 acres, the Carrizo Plain National Monument is a diverse complex of critical habitats for endangered and threatened species and significant archaeological and historical resources. During the wet season, Carrizo Plain is an internal drainage basin with surface water draining into Soda Lake, which evaporates during the dry season and becomes a white, salt-encrusted basin. The San Andreas fault makes its seemingly quiet path through the area, and is clearly visible near Wallace Creek. Native Americans hunted and traded in the area, evident by Painted Rock, one of the significant examples of Native American rock art in California.

More information is available in the following brochures and Internet sites:

- California BLM website *www.ca.blm.gov*
- NLCS website: *www.blm.gov/nhp/what/nlcs/index.html*
- California's Natural Wildlands Legacy Map/Brochure
- California's Natural Wildlands Legacy Brochure
- Regional Brochures
  - North Coast
  - CA/NV Great Basin
  - Sacramento Valley
  - Bay Delta
  - Sierra Foothills
  - Eastern Sierra
  - Central Coast
  - San Joaquin Valley
  - South Coast
  - Mojave Desert
  - Colorado Desert
- Headwaters Forest Reserve Brochure
- California Coastal National Monument Brochure

Statewide

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U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California State Office
2800 Cottage Way
Suite W1834
Sacramento, CA 95825
Tel: 916.978.4400
Fax: 916.978.4416

www.ca.blm.gov

National Scenic Trails

Authorized and designated by an act of Congress, national scenic trails provide for the conservation and enjoyment of significant scenic, historical, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails pass. The trails may be located so as to represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas. BLM manages 180 miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.

National Historic Trails

Also designated only by Congress, national historic trails follow as closely as possible to original trails or routes of national historic significance. Their purpose is to identify and protect historic routes and their historic artifacts for public use and enjoymenr. BLM manages four segments, nearly 140 miles, of the California National Historic Trail - the Applegate, the Lassen, the Nobles, and the Yreka - and 50 miles of the Juan Bautista DeAnza National Historic Trail.

Wilderness Areas

A wilderness area is a natural place where human influence is essentially unnoticeable, whether mountain or desert or seashore. These areas provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, scenic, or historic value. The BLM manages 75 congressionally designated wilderness areas in California encompassing 3.6 million acres.

Wilderness Study Areas

A wilderness study area contains many of the same attributes as wilderness areas but Congress has not yet determined if they should be formally designated. California has 87 WSAs which total nearly 1.5 million acres. Most of the WSAs are in the central and northern parts of the state. Some examples include the King Range, Fish Slough, and the Skedaddle Mountains.

National Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wild and scenic rivers are rivers or sections of rivers that are free-flowing and possess at least one outstanding value such as scenic, recreational, geological, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar features.

BLM has 77 miles of inholdings along six wild and scenic rivers -- the Klamath, Trinity, Eel, North Fork of the American, Merced and Tuolumne. BLM also administers holdings along the South Yuba River, which is a state of California designated wild and scenic river.

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